

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended) A multiple gear ratio transmission device, adapted to connect an engine to a load such as a motor vehicle, comprising:

an upper shaft,

a lower shaft,

at least two power paths which are each capable of interconnecting the upper shaft and the lower shaft, wherein each power path comprises at least two power sub-paths, each of which defines a respective transmission ratio between the upper shaft and the lower shaft,

for each power sub-path, one respective selective ~~aviator~~ gradual activator ~~which is of a gradual type~~ able during engagement process to match the engine speed and load speed with each other, there being provided an equal number of power sub-paths and of selective gradual activators,

wherein each power sub-path is uninterruptible between the upper shaft and the lower shaft except by disengagement of its respective gradual selective activator.

2. (Currently amended) A device according to claim 1, characterized in that the selective gradual activators are wet multi-disc friction couplings.

3. (Currently amended) A device according to claim 1, characterized in that at least some of the selective gradual activators are brakes that selectively connect a reaction member to a housing of the transmission device.

4. (Previously amended) A device according to claim 1, characterized in that each power path is kinematically independent and comprises an output unit permanently connected to the lower shaft.

5. (Previously amended) A device according to claim 1, characterized in that the two power paths are approximately identical and are capable of obtaining between their input unit and their output unit identical local gear ratios, but are connected to the upper shaft and/or the lower shaft with a different transfer ratio.

6. (Previously amended) A device according to claim 1, characterized in that each power path is capable of a local direct drive gear ratio.

7. (Currently amended) A device according to claim 1, characterized in that each power path is placed in neutral when all of the selective gradual activators of the power path are in a disengaged state.

8. (Previously cancelled)

9. (Previously amended) A device according to claim 1, characterized in that at least one of the power paths comprises at least one planetary gear train.

10. (Currently amended) A device according to claim 1, characterized in that at least one of the power paths comprises first and second planetary gear trains, respectively comprising:

first and second planet carriers, in which planet pinions are mounted in pairs in series,

first and second sun gears,

first and second ring gears,

in that:

the two ring gears are attached to an output unit of the power path,

the first planet carrier and the second sun gear are attached to an input unit of the power path,

and in that the selective gradual activators comprise:

a brake for the first sun gear,

a brake for the second planet carrier,

a direct drive clutch.

11. (Currently Amended) A device according to claim 1, characterised in that at least one of the power paths comprises first and second planetary gear trains, respectively comprising:

first and second planet carriers,

first and second sun gears,

first and second ring gears,

in that:

the first ring gear and the second planet carrier are attached to an output unit of the power path,

the first planet carrier and the second sun gear are attached to an input unit of the power path,

and in that the selective gradual activators comprise:

a brake for the second ring gear,

a brake for the first sun gear

a direct drive clutch.

12. (Previously amended) A device according to claim 1, characterized in that at least one of the input units and output units on each path is located in an intermediate position between the spatial ends of the path.

13. (Previously cancelled)

14. (Currently Amended) A device according to claim 1, characterized in that it comprises controls capable of synchronizing the gradual placing of a selective gradual activator in a neutral state with the gradual placing of another selective gradual activator in an activated state.